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(confirmation number 3993)
Title: Laminated Glass panels
Final action issued 20 aug 2004

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Declaration of John Ross Campbell

I am the John Ross Campbell named as the sole inventor in the above-identified patent application.

I had a conversation with US PTO examiner Ms Walls, on 10 February 2005.

Ms Walls: You suggested that if I put my position as I stated it on that occasion in the form of a Declaration, you would (or might) reconsider your rejection.

I have re-read Mr Asquith's Remarks submitted to the PTO 20 October 2004. As he says, the basis of my case is that I have two differences over the prior art. First, I use an NC machine to cut out the pieces of glass, which is new; and second, I use a template to position the cut pieces, which also is new. I would not contest that both of those difference might be regarded as obvious, if taken each one on its own. But taken both together, the two features lead to a way of producing fused glass panels that lends itself inexpensively to mass production, and I say that therefore taking the two features together is not obvious.

I now explain what is meant by the term "mass production" as applied to fused glass panels. Basically, making fused glass panels is one of the artistic designer crafts. As such, the very notion of production, let alone mass production, is foreign to most of the participants in the field. At the same time, the market for fused glass panels is very small, and mass production does not mean the same thing as in the automotive industry, with its very high capital investments. Rather, I have recognized that there is a niche between the conventional non-artistic mass produced panels, and the craftsman designed/made panels which are hugely more expensive than the non-artistic panels. They have to be so expensive - the individual panels take hours, each, to make by conventional craft techniques. By combining my two features, the cost of mass-producing highly artistic designs can be drastically reduced, without a huge capital outlay.

Ms Walls: My intention is to "cut to the chase" and the heart of the issue, lending the whole process a "human side". As we discussed, I do not have unlimited capital and I really am appealing to your sense of logic and trusting that after our phone conversation you have an idea of my sincerity and of the intent of this application in the first place.

My background is in stained glass and cabinet making well as business admin and sales. I have had experience in tool and die making and production principles. Such a broad

range of disciplines is unusual, but is the background leading to my invention.

You mentioned novelty and the combination of these ideas is "novel". My process is meant primarily to place artistic-graphic and detailed images upon background glass and then fuse the images to the glass permanently. While it is known to cut glass with N.C. machinery, this is done not for artistic images as much for automated production processes utilized in the automotive sector and such. Artists as a rule are not well capitalized and numerically controlled machines/water jet cutters would not suggest itself as a natural choice/method of production that an artist would use. In fact an N.C machine is one used for detailed production and the very idea of production at all contrasts with what an artist does. An artist creates "one offs" and individual art pieces.

Even if the N.C machine /water jet cutter were used by an artist for the glass, it would be to simply facilitate the cutting of intricate work that would otherwise be impossible to produce by hand. The idea of "production " still does not enter the picture. The notion that if you set up to make something once, set yourself up to manufacture hundreds, flies in the face of artistic convention.

In my experience, it is not a natural or obvious step for someone in the artistic field to logically go to the template idea, either. Craftspersons would not be after the idea of mass production in the first place. Someone with my background, who entered this field with the idea of attaining large production batches and who possesses my particular experience, had to come up with the idea of templates for these individual pieces and patterns as it suited my application and helped me achieve my goal of accuracy and consistency. Again, the notion of accuracy and consistency attributable to using a template fly in the face of artistic merit. To the artistic craftsman, the thought of uniform spacing of pieces and quality of production tolerances is actually a detriment to the piece.

While it might be obvious to use an N.C. machine for cutting glass pieces, and it might be obvious to use templates to position pieces, combining these steps in this particular craft/industry is indeed an unobvious step. One that I arrived at through the influence of my unique background.

As you asked for, in effect, my testimony on this subject. I can honestly testify to you that even after extensive research and experience in the glass/art industry, I have yet to find any process similar. The prior art you cited shows NC cutting machines, and shows templates for positioning pieces. Of course I knew about that. But I have seen nothing to the effect that, when making cut-glass fused panels, the use of templates for positioning only starts to serve any useful function when the glass pieces have been cut out by an NC machine.

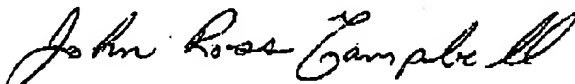
Hence my excitement and my belief that I am entitled to patent protection.

Mr Asquith has set out the arguments re the merits of my invention as distinguished from the prior art. My purpose here is to confirm and explain the "human" side, that it really is true that, in my field, that there is no constant overall push towards cheaper production

methods; I am the one who recognized that combining NC cutting with template positioning does not follow obviously from the prior art.

I hope you will reconsider my patent application in view of my arguments and testimony.

I hereby declare that all statements made herein of my own knowledge are true, and that all statements made on information and belief are believed to be true; and further that these statements are made with the knowledge that willful false statements and the like so made are punishable by fine or imprisonment or both under section 1001 of Title 18 of the United States Code, and that such willful false statements may jeopardize the validity of the application or any patent issuing therefrom.



Signature of inventor:

FEB 15 / 05

Date of signing: